

IN THE CLAIMS

1-31. (canceled)

32. (currently amended) A broadcast-program selection history information acquisition apparatus operable in a system including a multiplicity of said broadcast-program selection history information acquisition apparatuses and a notification destination, ~~the apparatuses being operable to transmit to the notification station, for acquiring selection history information of broadcast programs selected out of broadcast programs of a plurality of channels,~~ said broadcast-program selection history information acquisition apparatus comprising:

storage means for storing operable to store selection information regarding the selection of said selected broadcast programs at predetermined acquisition times from among programs broadcast on a plurality of channels; and

transmission means operable to periodically transmit for transmitting said selection history information including which is composed of a plurality of pieces of said selection information stored at a plurality of said acquisition times, to the notification destination at a transmission timing assigned at random in accordance with an intrinsic random number, said transmission timing being assigned within a predetermined restricted range of hours beginning at a predetermined time of day in which said multiplicity of said broadcast-program selection history information acquisition apparatuses are restricted to transmit.

33. (currently amended) A broadcast-program selection history information acquisition apparatus ~~for acquiring selection history information of broadcast programs selected out of broadcast programs of a plurality of channels,~~ comprising:

storage means operable to store for storing selection information regarding the selection of said selected broadcast

programs at predetermined acquisition times from among programs broadcast on a plurality of channels; and

transmission means operable to transmit ~~for transmitting~~ said selection history information including which is composed of a plurality of pieces of said selection information stored at a plurality of said acquisition times, through a predetermined telephone line to a notification destination at an intrinsically-assigned predetermined transmission timing, wherein

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~~said transmission means transmits said selection history information through a predetermined telephone line, and decides said predetermined transmission timing based on a telephone number assigned to said telephone line.~~

34. (canceled)

35. (canceled)

36. (currently amended) The broadcast-program selection history information acquisition apparatus according to claim 32, wherein said selection history information includes ~~is composed of~~ channel number information ~~of~~ regarding said selected broadcast programs and time information showing the time when said broadcast programs are selected.

37. (previously presented) The broadcast-program selection history information acquisition apparatus according to claim 32, wherein said selection history information includes an identification number intrinsically assigned to said broadcast-program selection history information acquisition apparatus.

38. (currently amended) The broadcast-program selection history information acquisition apparatus according to claim 32, wherein ~~when transmitting said selection history information to said notification destination~~ said transmission means is operable to transmit said selection history information through a predetermined line, ~~at said transmission timing, and said~~

broadcast-program selection history information acquisition apparatus is operable to changes at least one of a ~~the~~ setting of ~~for~~ said predetermined acquisition times and a ~~and/or the~~ setting of ~~for~~ said transmission timing based on a change command transmitted from said notification destination through said line.

39. (canceled)

40. (currently amended) A ~~broadcast-program-selection history information acquisition method of acquiring selection history information of broadcast programs selected out of broadcast programs of a plurality of channels, comprising the steps of:~~

providing a multiplicity of broadcast-program selection history information acquisition apparatuses;

storing selection information regarding the selection of said selected broadcast programs at predetermined acquisition times by said apparatuses from among programs broadcast on a plurality of channels; and

periodically transmitting said selection history information which is composed of a plurality of pieces of said selection information stored at a plurality of said acquisition times from said apparatuses to a notification station destination at a transmission timings assigned at random in accordance with an intrinsic random number within a predetermined restricted range of hours beginning at a predetermined time of day, said selection history information including a plurality of pieces of said selection information stored at a plurality of said acquisition times.

41. (currently amended) A ~~broadcast-program-selection history information acquisition method of acquiring selection history information of broadcast programs selected out of broadcast programs of a plurality of channels, comprising the steps of:~~

storing selection information regarding the selection of ~~said selected~~ broadcast programs at predetermined acquisition times from among programs broadcast on a plurality of channels; and

transmitting ~~said~~ selection history information including which is composed of a plurality of pieces of said selection information stored at a plurality of said acquisition times through a predetermined telephone line at an intrinsically-assigned predetermined transmission timing, wherein

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Ans ~~said broadcast program selection history information acquisition method transmits said selection history information through a predetermined telephone line, and decides said predetermined transmission timing based on a telephone number assigned to said telephone line.~~

42. (canceled)

43. (currently amended) The ~~broadcast program selection history information acquisition method~~ according to claim 40, wherein said selection history information ~~is composed of~~ includes channel number information ~~of regarding~~ said selected broadcast programs and time information showing the times when said broadcast programs are selected.

44. (currently amended) The ~~broadcast program selection history information acquisition method~~ according to claim 40, wherein said selection history information includes an identification number intrinsically assigned to a particular one of said broadcast-program selection history information acquisition apparatuses.

45. (currently amended) The ~~broadcast program selection history information acquisition method~~ according to claim 40, wherein ~~when transmitting~~ said selection history information is transmitted to said notification destination through a predetermined line, at said transmission timing, said

~~broadcast program selection history information acquisition method further comprising changing changes the at least one of a setting for of said predetermined acquisition times and a and/or the setting for of said transmission timing based on a change command transmitted received from said notification destination through said line.~~

46. (canceled)

47. (currently amended) Apparatus ~~for use in a system including a multiplicity of said broadcast program selection history information acquisition apparatuses and a notification station, the apparatuses being operable to transmit to the notification station, for use in acquiring broadcast-program selection history information, the apparatus comprising:~~

~~a front end section for receiving a signal operable to select a broadcast program from programs broadcast on a plurality of channels in accordance with selection input provided by a user and providing therefrom a selected broadcast program;~~

~~a memory operable to store for storing selection information associated with the selected broadcast program;~~

~~a random number generator; and~~

~~a transmitter operable to transmit for transmitting a signal representative of audience rating data based on the stored selection information to a the notification destination at a transmission timing assigned at random in accordance with an intrinsic random number, said transmission timing being assigned within a predetermined restricted range of hours beginning at a predetermined time of day. station, wherein the signal is transmitted as a function of a random number generated by the random number generator.~~

48. (previously presented) A broadcast-program selection history information acquisition apparatus according to claim 32, wherein said transmission means is operable to transmit a header

when transmitting said selection history information, said header including an identification number, said identification number including a telephone number belonging to a user of said apparatus.

49. (currently amended) ~~A broadcast program selection history information acquisition~~ The method according to claim 40, further comprising transmitting a header when transmitting said selection history information, said header including an identification number, said identification number including a telephone number belonging to a user of said apparatus.

50. (currently amended) An apparatus ~~A broadcast program selection history information acquisition apparatus~~ according to claim 47, wherein said transmitter transmission means ~~is~~ operable to transmit a header when transmitting the signal ~~said selection history information~~, said header including an identification number, said identification number including a telephone number belonging to a user of said apparatus.

51. (new) A broadcast-program selection history information acquisition apparatus comprising:

storage operable to store selection information regarding the selection of broadcast programs at respective acquisition times from among programs broadcast on a plurality of channels;

a transmitter operable to transmit selection history information including a plurality of pieces of said selection information stored at a plurality of said acquisition times to a notification destination at a predetermined transmission timing; and

a processor operable to cause said selection history information to be stored in said storage, to cause said selection history information to be transmitted by said transmitter, and to require authorizing input from a user upon restoration of power to said broadcast-program selection history

information acquisition apparatus after a loss of power thereto, prior to at least one of causing said selection information to be stored in said storage and causing said selection history information to be transmitted by said transmitter.

52. (new) A broadcast-program selection history information acquisition apparatus as claimed in claim 51, further comprising a power-supply detection circuit operable to detect at least one of the loss of power to said broadcast-program selection history information acquisition apparatus and the restoration of power thereto after loss.

53. (new) A broadcast-program selection history information acquisition apparatus as claimed in claim 52, wherein the power is alternating current (AC) power.

54. (new) The broadcast-program selection history information acquisition apparatus as claimed in claim 51, further comprising a user application executable by said processor to acquire said selection information based on user selection input, wherein said processor is operable to initialize said user application in response to the restoration of power, said authorizing input being required for execution of said user application.